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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the three major developmental strands that converged to contribute to the definition of the applied linguistics field in the Philippines: the institution and capacity-building work supported by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations; the forging of a vibrant consortium among three Filipino institutions of higher education to offer doctoral training in applied linguistics; and the contributions to educational and national development through research and applied activities of groups such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Institute for National Languages, and the Linguistic Society of the Philippines. This progress aside, it is asserted that much remains to be done, and that much remains to be learned about the development of decontextualized language abilities and about the mastery of content material of Tagalog or one of the principal vernacular languages. There is also a lot to be done to help determine the proper role of language and education and national development. (Contains 25 references.) (KFT)

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Applied Linguistics in the Philippines

From my perspective, the field of Applied Linguistics in the Philippines has, for several decades, been one of the most vibrant in the world. I have had the good fortune–both personally and later vicariously–to participate in this development, and I here propose to review and comment on the major milestones in the evolution of the field.

For practical purposes, the origins of the field are signaled by publication of the landmark report by Clifford Prator on "Language Teaching in the Philippines" in 1950 which led to the creation of the Philippine Center for Language Teaching and later the Language Study Center with their ambitious research and training agendas. A multiple-year partnership with several North American universities (e.g., UCLA, University of Michigan, and McGill University) led to the development and implementation of an ambitious research program spanning the fields of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and language policy and planning. The field benefited enormously with the return of four key individuals–Bonifacio P. Sibayan, Andrew Gonzalez, Fe T. Otanes and Emy Pascasio–from doctoral training abroad when they, in turn, became the key personnel in the training of future generations of Filipino applied linguists through the Consortium program.

In my presentation, I shall trace the three major developmental strands that converged to contribute to the definition of the field in the Philippines: (1) the "Institution and capacity building" work supported by agencies such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation; (2) the forging of a vibrant consortium among three Filipino IHEs (Ateneo de Manila, De La Salle, and Philippine Normal University) to offer doctoral training in applied linguistics; and (3) the contributions to educational and national development through the research and applied activities of groups such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Institute for National Languages, and the Linguistic Society of the Philippines.

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Applied Linguistics in the Philippines

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Introduction. From my perspective, the field of Applied Linguistics in the Philippines has, for several decades, been one of the most vibrant in the world. I have had the good fortune–both personally in the 1960s and later vicariously–to participate in this development, and I here propose to review and comment on the major milestones in the evolution of the field, albeit from a slightly distant vantage point (with apologies to my student and long time friend Emma Santos Castillo from the Philippine Normal University who had originally hoped to participate in this symposium but was unable to do so).

In this presentation, I shall trace briefly the three major developmental strands that converged to contribute to the definition of the field of Applied Linguistics in the Philippines: (1) the "institution and capacity building" work supported by agencies such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation; (2) the forging of a vibrant consortium among three Filipino institutions of higher education (Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, and Philippine Normal University) to offer doctoral training in applied linguistics; and (3) the contributions to educational and national development through the research and applied activities of groups such as the consortium of universities, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (now SIL International), the Institute for National Languages, and the Linguistic Society of the Philippines.

The Early Days: Institution and Capacity Building. For practical purposes, the origins of the field are signaled by publication of the landmark report by Clifford Prator on "Language Teaching in the Philippines" in 1950. The report was completed at a time when the education system was perceived to be at a crisis point. Parents and educators alike worried that their children were neither developing the language proficiency nor the subject-matter competency that they needed to participate in an increasingly industrialized society. This was particularly true in the rural, and largely non-Tagalog, provincial areas of the country.

The 'Prator' Report. Clifford Prator, at the time, was a member of the Department of English at UCLA and had completed his study while on a Fulbright-supported fellowship. In his comprehensive assessment, Prator first described in some detail the general language situation in the country and examined the implications of

widespread linguistic heterogeneity for curricular reform. At the time, English was officially the medium of instruction for all public education with Tagalog (an indigenous language spoken in Manila and the surrounding region) which had been selected in 1946 as the national language taught as a subject and Spanish introduced as an additional subject at the secondary level. He then examined in some detail the then-current practices with respect to English teaching in the schools reviewing materials, patterns of classroom instruction, training programs and opportunities, as well as the results from a number of studies (e.g., the so-called "Iloilo Experiment," etc.) that had been undertaken. Prator concluded his report with a number of recommendations, among them the desirability of developing a set of linkages with American institutions that might lead to capacity building and institutional development:

> f. That the possibility of working out an exchange of teachers between Philippine and American schools be investigated.
>
> g. That the U.S. Educational Foundation continue its policy of bringing in a few well qualified specialists in the teaching of English as a second language, and that these be placed in the normal schools and used in carrying our special summer workshops (Prator, 1950, p. 92).

This report, and subsequent discussions, were to have enormous impact on the development of applied linguistics in the Philippines.

As Bonifacio Sibayan (1997) noted:

> In 1951 when I first read the report on language teaching in the Philippines by Prator (1950) two things struck me, namely: (1) that here was a nation, the Philippines, trying to educate its population of more than 18 million in a second (foreign) language with only one educator (Cecilio Lopez of the University of the Philippines who obtained his degree in linguistics in Germany) knowledgeable in linguistics, and (2) Prator's vivid description of the Filipino school child's practically futile efforts to learn English. (p. 218)

As Franklin Rolfe (1980), professor emeritus at UCLA, noted:

> This admirable monograph so impressed the Rockefeller Foundation staff that they offered Prator and the Department of English a large grant to improve the teaching of English in the Philippine schools. With certain misgivings, the Department accepted. But though ambitious and complex, this proved to be a model project (p. viii).

International Support, Institution Building, and Capacity Development. The positive reactions to this report signaled the beginning of a long and enduring relationship among private philanthropic foundations, Philippine language educators, and international specialists which led to:

- the training of numerous Filipino scholars in North America
- the establishment of M.A. level training programs in Manila
- the development of innovative materials for the teaching of English
- the implementation of applied research activities in the Philippines

The Philippine Center for Language Study. Specifically, the Rockefeller Foundation provided support in 1957 for the establishment of the Philippine Center for Language Study (PCLS). The PCLS was established as a private non-profit autonomous entity in relationship with the Department of Education and UCLA. The PCLS was co-directed by a Filipino scholar and an American scholar–effectively, Jose Aguilar and J. Donald Bowen (see Sibayan, 1989)

The PCLS participated actively in the identification of Filipino teachers for advanced training abroad. A large number of teachers were sent to study (applied) linguistics and language teaching at the University of Michigan and UCLA. Noteworthy among these scholars were Fe. T. Otanes (UCLA) and Emy Pascasio and Bonifacio P. Sibayan (both University of Michigan), and later Edilberto P. Dagot (NYU) and Andrew Gonzalez (Berkeley). In fact, during the years of Rockefeller–and later Ford Foundation–support, several hundred Filipino educators received advanced training in the United States.

The PCLS also implemented a broadly based research agenda directed toward understanding better the optimal mix of factors involved in the choice and sequencing of languages in elementary literacy instruction and in education more broadly. One of the major research activities was the so-called Rizal Experiment (Davis, 1967), a large, complex and well-executed longitudinal study.

Additionally, PCLS staff developed a variety of teaching materials and conducted numerous in-service workshops for Filipino English language teachers. According to Sibayan (1989), however, the most successful component of PCLS assistance was their collaborative work in establishing the M. A. degree in teaching English as a second language in 1958. The PCLS collaborated integrally with the Philippine Normal College (PNC)—the national teacher-training institution. Staff from the PCLS taught graduate courses in applied linguistics at PNC which formed part of the core curriculum for the M.A. (This program was the forerunner of the Ph.D. program in Applied Linguistics that was later to be offered by a consortium involving PNC, the Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University.) The establishment of the M.A. program was followed shortly in 1960 by the formation of the Philippine Association for Language Teaching (PALT) which began publication of the Philippine Journal for Language Teaching the next year (1961). Likewise about this same time, a continuing collaboration was begun with specialists from the Summer Institute of Linguistics (now SIL International).

Thus, by the early 1960s, the field of applied linguistics–with a focus on the improvement of second language learning and teaching–was effectively launched in the Philippines. Support from the Rockefeller Foundation continued for six years.

The Language Study Center. The Board of Trustees of PNC formed the Language Study Center (LSC) in 1964 with Bonifacio Sibayan as its first director. That year, the LSC which continues to function to this day received the first of a series of major grants from the Ford Foundation (see Fox, 1968; 1975; 1997 and Fox & Skolnik, 1975) intended to promote activities such as:

- faculty development abroad
- teacher development in the Philippines

- applied research
- publications

Once again, UCLA (and Clifford Prator) played a major role in 'backstopping' the activities of the LSC. They recruited international specialists who would serve as visiting faculty members at PNC under the aegis of the Ford Foundation (e.g., Tommy R. Anderson, Robert C, Gardner, Henry Feenstra and I served in this way); they arranged for the exchange of doctoral students from North America who would come to PNC to conduct doctoral research in the Philippines (e.g., Myrtis Campbell, Sandy Shamis and Jack Wigfield); they assisted in the placement of Filipino doctoral candidates studying abroad; and they provided facilities for Filipino faculty on study leaves in the United States.

With the infusion of Filipino faculty returning from abroad, and the arrival of expatriate faculty under Ford Foundation auspices, the teaching and research missions of the LSC were extended. The scope of course offerings and the number of students enrolled in the M.A. program in the teaching of English as a second language was expanded.

Additionally, a Child Study Center, under the direction of Amanda Tayag, and a Reading Center, under the direction of Edilberto P. Dagot, were established with the intention of broadening the type of teacher preparation programs offered at PNC as well as the base of research activities (e.g., the training of scholars as child development and reading specialists and the launching of research in development psychology and early literacy).

Although the research foci of LSC faculty and staff members were broad, the following strands were particularly noteworthy:

- sociolinguistic fieldwork intended to inform the choice and implementation of language education policy and practice
- evaluative work to examine the impact of the 1974 national Bilingual Education Policy
- study of the minority languages of the Philippines
- the development of materials and tools for the teaching of English, Pilipino and other Filipino languages

A sample of papers representing the richness of the research conducted during that period is found in collections such as those edited by Gonzalez and Bautista (1986), Gonzalez and Sibayan (1988) and Pascasio (1977).

The Consortium of Institutions of Higher Education. Although the field of applied linguistics had begun to flourish in the Philippines following the establishment of the Philippine Center for Language Study and subsequently the Language Study Center, there was a growing uneasiness on the part of senior Filipino scholars concerning the training of future generations of Filipino applied linguists.

Ample funding had been provided by the Ford Foundation to send younger talented Filipino scholars to North America for advanced training, but this *new* cohort of students (i.e., those sent abroad in the late 1960s following the return of Dagot and

Gonzalez) were unique in that they did *not* return to the Philippines–they remained in Canada or the United States and accepted academic, or other, positions abroad.

This experience led Sibayan and other Filipino colleagues to develop a proposal for the formation of an inter-university Consortium (initially including the Philippine Normal College and the Ateneo de Manila University but almost immediately expanded to include De La Salle University). The Consortium program was established in the early 1970s with specializations in Malayo-Polynesian linguistics and applied linguistics (which covered the areas of sociolinguistics, language learning and language teaching and bilingual education).

The Consortium program was well received and continues to function today. Notable among the early graduates from the program were Emma Castillo, Ma. Lourdes Bautista and Fe Aldave Yap who today serve as the leaders of the *current generation* of Filipino applied linguists.

The activities of scholars working with the Consortium were further strengthened with the founding of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines (LSP) and the launching of the Philippine Journal of Linguistics–both of which are now in their 30th year (see Bautista, 1989). The LSP sponsors an annual conference attended by Filipino linguists as well as international scholars from throughout the region (see, for example, Castillo, 1998).

Contributions to National and Educational Development. I turn now to a brief discussion of the central role of applied linguistics (and of applied linguists) in contributing to the educational and national development of the Philippines. The contemporary history of language education in the Philippines is replete with instances of exemplary application of rigorous "cycles of discovery" (see Swain, 1996) beginning with the important study and report of Clifford Prator (1950) through the myriad activities conducted by staff at the Philippine Center for Language Study and the Language Study Center of the Philippine Normal College which resulted in research such as the Iloilo and Rizal experiments (see, for example, Davis ,1967), the national Language Policy Survey, and the summative evaluation of experience with bilgingual education (Gonzalez & Sibayan, 1988). And indeed it is interesting to note that the catalysts for continuing attention to the importance of careful planning and documentation of innovative language education policy and practice to this day remain Andrew Gonzalez (1998) and Bonifacio Sibayan (1997).

Indeed, I would be remiss if I did not note that the Philippines is one of a handful of countries in which an individual formally trained in applied linguistics, Andrew Gonzalez (Berkeley, 1970), has risen to the post of [national] Secretary of Education (the only other such individual who comes immediately to mind is Jacek Fisiak in Poland.]

However, a discussion of the development of applied linguistics in the Philippines would be seriously incomplete without mention of the work of two other organizations–the Summer Institute of Linguistics (now SIL International) and the Institute of National Language in addition to those described above.

Representatives of SIL International have been actively involved in the Philippines since the 1950s (see Elkins, 1989; Wolfenden, in Madrid, 1989). Their field staff have focused on complex psycholinguistic issues such as mutual intelligibility (Quakenbush, 1989) and the subsequent implications for language description, and have described and codified myriad previously unwritten languages throughout the Philippines. SIL personnel have also been actively involved in literacy programs and indeed SIL was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Peace Prize for contributions to national literacy education in 1968.

Currently, SIL staff are assisting local, regional and national agencies that are trying to develop formal and informal education in vernacular languages (see, for example, the work of Dekker, 1999). Their cooperative efforts are well received by the Philippine government where they are perceived as full and equal partners in their contributions to language planning, policy and development. [For general bibliographic and other information about SIL International, see http://www.sil.org]

Finally, a brief word should be said about the complementary role played by the Institute for National Languages. This organization is the lead government agency charged with responsibility for describing the major Philippine languages (see Yap, 1977) and for ensuring the development of Filipino as specified in the Constitution of 1987. Fe Aldave Yap, one of the early group trained in the Consortium doctoral program, is noteworthy in leading this effort.

In Conclusion. It is noteworthy too, that I here introduce a word of caution as well as a call for continuing action. There remain at least two major challenges facing Philippine language educators: the cultivation or intellectualization of Filipino (see Gonzalez, 1998 and Sibayan, 1999 for a discussion of the critical nature of this problem), and the problems of providing a meaningful education for children from minority-language backgrounds.

Despite the truly impressive number of significant language education studies that have been conducted in the Philippines, there remains much to be learned about the development of decontextualized language abilities and about the mastery of content material on the part of the many Filipino children who are not mother tongue speakers of Tagalog or of one of the principal regional vernacular languages. The composite portrait of language education policies and practices throughout the world is exceedingly complex—and simultaneously fascinating. In many parts of the world, educators are faced with the challenge of providing access to meaningful education to children who come from backgrounds very similar to those that typify Filipino children, for example, those from Kalinga Province who enter school with only marginal familiarity with Ilocano and even less with Filipino or English. At the same time, there exists a goal to help the child develop lasting literacy skill(s) and master content material and to become fluent in one or more of the area's national language(s) or languages of wider communication. The challenge of how best to assist such children who are speakers of so-called minority languages remains a perplexing one.

And it is here, I believe, that Filipino applied linguists will continue to have a great deal to contribute to the ongoing worldwide debate about the role of language in education and national development. By focusing some of their resources and attention on the

vexing problems of educating the young speakers of so-called minority languages, and with a continuing commitment to longitudinal evaluation and documentation, and the broadest possible dissemination of their methodologies and results they should be able to inform and influence significantly and dramatically our thinking about innovative language education programs and their feasibility throughout the world.

In a more general sense, I should conclude by noting:

1. The contributions by folks trained in (applied) linguistics were instrumental in Philippine educational reform duriing the period 1950--1974 (i.e., from the Prator report to the implementation of the Bilingual Education Policy);

2. that inevitably applied linguists need to be prepared to work collaboratively with diverse others (develop an appreciation for and understanding of differing methodologies, approaches, sensitivities to differences in accepted "burdens of proof"); and

3. that there are profound challenges related to educational and national development that confront (literally) a majority of the world's population that lend themselves to (or require the special knowledge and training of) investigation by applied linguists (e.g., Nearly one-sixth of the 5.9 billion people in the world cannot read or write according to a survey published 12/9/98 by UNICEF; and according to a year-end briefing by Koffi Anon, Three of four children in the ?poorest nations? in the world are not in school).

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